

Congratulations to Alzheimer's advocates around the state – your efforts resulted in several key legislative victories for people living with Alzheimer's disease and their families. Thank you for your part in a successful legislative session at the State Capitol!

****Key Legislative Victories****

Senate Bill 940 (Hannah-Beth Jackson, D – Santa Barbara), Chapter 553

This bill amends California's Guardianship and Conservatorship Law to incorporate the Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act (UAGPPJA). UAGPPJA is a national public policy priority of the Alzheimer's Association – California is the 42nd jurisdiction to pass this law with the goal of enacting it in all 50 states and U.S. territories. SB 940 becomes operative on January 1, 2016.

Why is this important to Californians living with Alzheimer's disease and their families? When a guardian lives or travels outside the state where court documents are filed, they often have to re-file an entirely new guardianship request which is an administrative burden and unnecessary expense. It also can be a harmful delay at a critical time. And when a decision needs to be made regarding finances, healthcare or living arrangements, some states won't honor the wishes of a guardian from out-of-state unless UAGPPJA is in place. SB 940 allows reciprocity between California and the 41 other states and U.S. territories with UAGPPJA laws to ensure continued legal protections without adding new or costly hurdles to the family.

To link to the final version of the bill, signed into law by Governor Brown:

http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/13-14/bill/sen/sb_0901-0950/sb_940_bill_20140925_chaptered.pdf

To link to a fact sheet on UAGPPJA:

http://act.alz.org/site/DocServer/2012_UAGPPJA.pdf?docID=1821

To link to a map of the participating states:

<http://act.alz.org/site/DocServer/UAGPPJAMap.pdf?docID=1521>

Assembly Bill 1570 (Wesley Chesbro, D-Santa Rosa), Chapter 698

This bill advances one of the national public policy strategies of the Alzheimer's Association (improve dementia training) and it furthers California's Alzheimer's Disease State Plan goal area of "developing an Alzheimer's proficient, culturally competent workforce." Most importantly, AB 1570 introduces dementia training standards for direct care staff working in all of California's 7,000+ Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs). Whether a facility is a small, 6-bed family-owned and operated board and care home or a large-scale, high-end assisted living facility, the standards are the same.

Why is this important to Californians living with Alzheimer's disease and their families? Prior to AB 1570's passage, only RCFEs that advertised or promoted specialized dementia care were required by law to train their direct care staff on the disease process, communication

techniques, effective behavioral interventions and other dementia-specific care needs. This excluded the vast majority of California's 7,000 RCFEs. Statistically, about one in four RCFE residents has some form of cognitive impairment and in many facilities, the numbers are much higher. AB 1570 recognizes the prevalence of memory loss in residential settings – regardless of whether or not there is a documented Alzheimer's disease diagnosis in the chart, and begins to address the specialized care needs for this population through increased training. The bill takes effect January 1, 2016.

To link to the final version of the bill, signed into law by Governor Brown:

http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/13-14/bill/asm/ab_1551-1600/ab_1570_bill_20140928_chaptered.pdf

Senate Bill 1127 (Norma Torres, D-Pomona), Chapter 440

This bill expands existing law known as "Silver Alert" to include missing persons under the age of 65 who are developmentally disabled or cognitively impaired. Silver Alert got its name from the "silver-haired" senior citizens it protects. The Alzheimer's Association partnered with the autism advocacy community to ensure that adults of all ages who are at risk of wandering are protected by law enforcement. SB 1127 authorizes law enforcement to issue a public safety alert, under specified conditions, when such a person is reported missing by a family member, friend or neighbor.

Why is this important to Californians living with Alzheimer's disease and their families? From a public safety standpoint, law enforcement officials aren't attuned to the special needs of individuals with early-onset Alzheimer's disease in their 40's and 50's and people in the early stages of the disease who are younger than or appear younger than age 65. When these individuals are lost or wandering, they don't present as someone in crisis as a "silver-haired" senior citizen might. This population needs the same protections as their older counterparts, and SB 1127 extends Silver Alert status to them as well.

For a link to the final version of the bill, signed into law by Governor Brown:

http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/13-14/bill/sen/sb_1101-1150/sb_1127_bill_20140918_chaptered.pdf

The Alzheimer's Association also followed several other bills this year that did not pass. Briefly, here is the status of these bills:

Assembly Bill 1552 (Bonnie Lowenthal, D-Long Beach) - Support

This bill proposed new statutory language to codify into law the Community-Based Adult Services (CBAS) program, formerly known as Adult Day Health Care (ADHC). In his veto message, Governor Brown wrote: *"Currently, this benefit is authorized under an approved waiver by the federal government. The terms of the waiver may change, pending federal review. This important program will continue to help many thousands of frail adults remain independent. Codifying it now is premature."*

Assembly Bill 1744 (Cheryl Brown, D-San Bernardino) – Support

This bill proposed that the California Department of Aging (CDA) establish a blue-ribbon task force to make legislative recommendations to improve services for unpaid and family caregivers, contingent upon the CDA securing sufficient non-state funds from private sources to implement the California Caregiver Act of 2014.

In his veto message, Governor Brown wrote: *“The California State Plan on Aging, the California Plan for Alzheimer's Disease, the significant reports and action plans developed by the 33 Area Agencies on Aging, the Alzheimer's Association, the AARP and so many others have produced ample evidence for knowledgeable and caring people to recommend ways to improve support for family caregivers. Establishing another task force in state law simply isn't necessary.”*

Senate Bill 1207 (Lois Wolk, D-Davis) – Oppose

This bill would have jeopardized the longstanding State Tax Check-Off for Alzheimer's Disease Research, a voluntary state program that has generated more than \$12 million in research funding since inception in 1988 and has raised more than \$400,000 through August of this year alone. Our tax check-off is secure on California state income tax forms through 2020, but this bill would have changed the process, forcing Alzheimer's disease research to compete with hundreds of other nonprofit organizations and causes. The option to fund Alzheimer's disease research would no longer appear on the tax form. For a state fund that has been in continuous compliance with all laws and requirements since 1988, SB 1207 was viewed as a threat to vital Alzheimer's disease research programs that struggle for financial support. Fortunately, the Assembly Appropriations Committee held the bill on suspense due to cost concerns, and SB 1207 never advanced to the Governor's desk.

For questions regarding state policy, contact:
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